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C O N F I D E N T I A L SKOPJE 001097

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STATE FOR EUR/SCE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/17/2016

TAGS: MARR MOPS NATO PREL MK AG

SUBJECT: MACEDONIA: REDUCING ISAF CAVEATS

REF: A. STATE 186256

1B. SKOPJE 484

Classified By: P/E CHIEF SHUBLER, REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

11. (C) P/E Chief delivered reftel points on filling ISAF force shortfalls and reducing caveats to MFA State Counselor Milan Spiridonovski on November 16. Acting DATT delivered the same points to MOD Elenovski on November 14. Both interlocutors informed us that the GOM intends to remove before the Riga Summit five of the seven caveats currently in force for Macedonian troops supporting ISAF operations in Afghanistan (ref B). Of the two remaining caveats, one would prohibit Macedonian troops from carrying out "an order, the execution of which would constitute a criminal act according to Macedonian law or which would be contrary to human rights conventions or the Law of Armed Conflict." The second caveat prohibits Macedonian forces from "carrying out operations aimed at demolishing bridges, tunnels, dams or dikes, and other infrastructure objects of significance."

12. (C) Spiridonovski said the MFA and MOD would recommend the deletion of the five caveats at an upcoming government session, hopefully before the Riga Summit, and was confident the recommendation would be approved. He said the government would propose limiting caveats to the two mentioned above in language for parliamentary approval of future troop deployments to Afghanistan. Such language would be included in the proposal for approving the next troop rotation, due to take place this December.

13. (C) The five caveats to be eliminated, according to the MOD, currently prohibit Macedonian troops from:

a.) Carrying out offensive operations planned with the purpose of capturing territory or part of a territory inhabited by a civilian population and in which there is a risk of possible collateral damage to that population.

b.) Carrying out operations planned to be executed on territory or part of a territory where NBC agents might be present.

c.) Carrying out operations in religious buildings, museums, and other sites containing cultural and/or archaeological heritage.

d.) Carrying out riot control operations.

e.) Training host country national security forces.

MILOVANOVIC